

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9616

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 0488

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, AR

SUBJ: REQUEST BY LATTER-DAY SAINTS FOR ASSESSMENT OF TERRORIST
SITUATION IN CONNECTION WITH PROGRAM REGIONAL CONFERENCE,
MID-FEBRUARY 1975

1. THE FOLLOWING IS THE BODY OF A LETTER DATED DEC 30,
ADDRESSED TO THE RSO FROM JAMES EARL JONES,MANAGER SAFETY AND
SECURITY DIVISION THE CHURCH OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS, 50 EAST
NORTH TEMPLE, SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH:

"PLEASE BE ADVISED THAT THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF
LATTER-DAY SAINTS HAS PROGRAMMED A REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN YOUR
AREA FOR MID-FEBRUARY 1975. THOSE TO ATTEND WILL INCLUDE MEMBERS
OF THE FIRST PRESIDENCY, GENERAL AUTHORITIES, AND REGIONAL
REPRESENTATIVES.

IN A CONTINUAL EFFORT TO EVALUATE THE LEVEL OF SECURITY RE-
QUIRED FOR THE GENERAL WELFARE OF THE BRETHERN, THE FOLLOWING
INFORMATION IS REQUESTED:

1. THE NATURE, IF ANY, OF THE GENERAL TERRORIST THREAT IN YOUR
AREA.
2. WHETHER AMERICAN CITIZENS OR COMPANIES HAVE BEEN THE TARGET
OF ANY TERRORIST THREAT OR ACTION IN THE RECENT PAST.
3. WHAT SPECIFIC AREAS OF THE CITY OR COUNTRYSIDE ARE
CONSIDERED DANGEROUS FOR FOREIGN VISITORS.
4. POLICE REQUIREMENTS FOR EMPLOYMENT OF PRIVATE SECURITY
SERVICES.
5. IN THE CASE OF A TERRORIST ACTION AGAINST A MEMBER OF OUR
GROUP, WHAT ASSISTANCE CAN THE EMBASSY OR CONSULATE PROVIDE.

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BASED ON AN ANALYSIS OF ALL AVAILABLE INFORMATION ONE OF THREE

SECURITY PROCEDURES IS NORMALLY FOLLOWED:

1. WHEN THE SITUATION IS CONSIDERED STABLE, THE LOCAL MEMBERS, SOME PROFESSIONALLY QUALIFIED, HANDLE SECURITY FOR THE BRETHERN USING A CHECK LIST PROVIDED BY THIS OFFICE.

2. WHEN THE SITUATION IS QUESTIONABLE, AN ADVANCE MAN IS DISPATCHED TO THE AREA TO COORDINATE SECURITY COVERAGE WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND ENSURES ITS COMPLETENESS.

3. WHEN THE SITUATION IS UNSTABLE, A SECURITY TEAM ACCOMPANIES THE BRETHERN AND HANDLES ALL SECURITY DETAILS.

IN YOUR OPINION, WHICH COVERAGE IS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR AREA?

NEEDLESS TO SAY, AT THIS POINT IN TIME, THIS IS A HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL MATTER AND SHOULD NOT BECOME COMMON KNOWLEDGE. PLEASE BE ASSURED OF OUR CONTINUED COOPERATION IN ALL MATTERS OF MUTUAL INTEREST"

2. DUE TO THE NATURE OF THE FACT THAT IT IS A RELIGIOUS GROUP MAKING THE INQUIRY AND THE LEVEL OF PROMINENCE OF THE PERSONNEL WHO WISH TO VISIT ARGENTINA IN MID-FEBRUARY, IT IS FELT THAT THIS LETTER COULD MORE APPROPRIATELY BE ANSWERED BY THE DEPT. IT IS SUGGESTED THAT ARA/APU PREPARE THE REPLY.

3. THE FOLLOWING IS FURNISHED AS ASSISTANCE TO ARA/APU IN RESPONDING:

A. THE NATURE OF THE TERRORIST THREAT IS ONLY SLIGHTLY IMPROVED FROM THAT WHICH EXISTED THREE OR FOUR MONTHS AGO. DISSIDENT ELEMENTS WITHIN THE COUNTRY CONTINUE TO CARRY OUT ACTIVITIES OF ASSASSINATIONS AND KIDNAPPINGS OF REPRESENTATIVES OF BOTH FOREIGN AND LOCAL COMPANIES. IN APRIL OF 1974 A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE USIA WAS KIDNAPPED FROM HIS QUARTERS IN CORDOBA DURING THE COURSE OF WHICH HE WAS SEVERELY WOUNDED. NO AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN HAS BEEN KIDNAPPED IN RECENT MONTHS. HOWEVER AN ATTEMPTED KIDNAPPING WAS CARRIED OUT AGAINST REPRESENTATIVES OF A BRITISH COMPANY WITHIN THE LAST MONTH. SEVERAL ARGENTINE BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES HAVE EITHER BEEN KIDNAPPED OR ASSASSINATED IN THE LAST 60 DAYS. TO DATE NO KNOWN TERRORIST ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN DIRECTED TOWARD THE AVERAGE TOURIST OR ANY REPRESENTATIVE OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS. DISSIDENT ELEMENTS STILL PROJECT AS A PART OF THEIR POLICY THE KIDNAPPING AND/OR ASSASSINATION OF ARGENTINE POLICE AND OTHER GOVERNMENTAL OFFICIALS, LOCAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

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FOREIGN BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVES.

B. NO SPECIFIC AREAS OF THE CITY OF BUENOS AIRES ARE CONSIDERED DANGEROUS FOR FOREIGN VISITORS. IN THE PROVINCES OF CORDOBA, SANTA FE, CATAMARCO, SALTA AND PARTICULARLY IN TUCUMAN, ACTIVITY IS TAKING PLACE BETWEEN DISSIDENT ELEMENTS AND ARGENTINE POLICE FORCES. VISITORS HAVE NOT BEEN RESTRICTED OR OFFICIALLY ADVISED NOT TO TRAVEL IN THESE AREAS, US GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ARE RESTRICTED FROM SUCH TRAVEL EXCEPT WHEN FOLLOWING OUTLINED

SECURITY PROCEDURES.

C. THE USE OF PRIVATE SECURITY SERVICES WITHIN ARGENTINA IS AN ACCEPTED PRACTICE. THERE ARE SEVERAL SUCH GROUPS WHICH PROVIDE SUCH SERVICES AND WHICH FUNCTION WITH THE KNOWLEDGE AND APPROVAL OF THE FEDERAL POLICE. CONTACT WITH THESE COMPANIES WOULD NEED TO BE MADE LOCALLY BY ANYONE DESIRING THE USE OF THEIR SERVICES.

D. TERRORIST ACTIVITIES ARE BASICALLY AN INTERNAL AFFAIR. THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE PROTECTION OF FOREIGN VISITORS RESTS WITH THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT. THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IS NOT BY CHARTER NOR IS IT EQUIPPED TO FURNISH ANY TYPE OF PROTECTIVE SERVICE TO VISITING GROUPS. IN THE EVENT SOME TERRORIST ACT WOULD BE COMMITTED AGAINST A VISITING GROUP, IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE ARGENTINE GOVERNMENT TO DEAL WITH THE ISSUE. THE EMBASSY AND/OR ITS CONSULAR SECTION WOULD FURNISH SUCH ASSISTANCE AS PRESCRIBED BY LAW.

E. AS TO WHAT COVERAGE IS APPROPRIATE FOR THIS AREA, IT IS FELT THAT THIS DECISION MUST REST WITH THE VISITING GROUP. DETAILS AS TO THE LOCAL CONDITIONS SHOULD BE AVAILABLE THROUGH THE SENIOR MEMBER OF THE CHURCH RESIDING IN ARGENTINA. THE EMBASSY CAN IN NO WAY RECOMMEND THE SIZE, COMPOSITION, EQUIPMENT OR ANY OTHER ITEMS RELATED TO A SECURITY TEAM PROVIDING PROTECTION FOR A VISITING GROUP. IN ADDITION, THE EMBASSY CANNOT RECOMMEND SPECIFIC COMPANIES TO BE USED FOR PROVIDING GUARD SERVICE OR OTHER RELATED ACTIVITIES. SHOULD A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE CHURCH CONTACT THE EMBASSY, THE SECURITY OFFICE WILL GLADLY FURNISH TO HIM AVAILABLE INFORMATION ON LOCAL CONDITIONS, IN ADDITION THE SECURITY OFFICE WILL GLADLY PLACE THIS REPRESENTATIVE IN CONTACT WITH THE APPROPRIATE OFFICE IN THE ARGENTINE FEDERAL POLICE FOR ANY ASSISTANCE WHICH THEY MAY BE ABLE TO PROVIDE.

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